

1. System for remotely determining the position of a selected category of items of interest in a selected geographic vicinity from a database, the system comprising

(A) a database for storing information about a plurality of items of interest, the information including, for each of the items of interest, positional coordinates, a geographic vicinity, and at least one associated category,

(B) a communications link for communicating between a user of the system and the database,

(C) means for transmitting a portion of the information in the database to a user via the link upon receipt of a request signal representative of a selected category and geographic vicinity, the transmitted portion of the information including identification of a position for the items of interest within the selected category and geographic vicinity, and

(D) a port for remotely accessing the portion of information via the link, the port generating the request signal in response to inputs by a user which are representative of the selected category and geographic vicinity, the port having a user interface for accepting the inputs and for indicating to the user the position of each of the items of interest in the selected category and geographic vicinity.

2. System according to claim 1 wherein the link comprises at least one of the following: a telephone link, satellite link, radio-frequency link, infra-red link, internet link, facsimile link, fiber-optic link, coaxial cable link and television link.

3. System according to claim 1 wherein the database is selected from the group consisting of a personal computer, mainframe, work-station, mini-computer, and a digital data processor.

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4. System according to claim 1 wherein the user interface further comprises a member of the group consisting of a television, telephone, facsimile, audible speaker, and personal computer display, for indicating information to the user.
5. System according to claim 1 wherein the user interface further comprises a member of the group consisting of a television interface, telephone interface, facsimile interface, and personal computer interface, for communicating the inputs to the port.
6. System according to claim 1 wherein the geographic vicinity comprises spatial detail of the items of interest.
7. System according to claim 1 wherein the geographic vicinity comprises a map of the items of interest in the selected category and selected geographic vicinity.
8. System according to claim 1, further comprising means for interpreting the inputs by the user and for formulating the inputs into the request signal.
9. System according to claim 1, further comprising means for interpreting certain of the inputs as items of interest and for transposing such inputs into a selected category automatically.
10. System according to claim 1, wherein the set of positional coordinates comprises a location of a user of the system.
11. System according to claim 1, wherein the set of positional coordinates comprises information identifying a destination location within the geographic vicinity.
12. System according to claim 1, further comprising data representing the information.

13. System according to claim 1, wherein the information comprises additional detail for at least one of the items of interest, and further comprising means for selecting and communicating the additional detail to the user.

14. System according to claim 13, wherein the additional detail is selected from the group of video, prerecorded music, and digital pictures.

15. System according to claim 1, wherein the information comprises an advertisement associated with at least one of the items of interest, and further comprising means for communicating the advertisement to the user.

16. System according to claim 1, wherein the information comprises a plurality of discrete geographic vicinities, and further comprising means for hierarchically selecting any of the discrete vicinities from the port.

✓ 17. Database apparatus for storing information about a plurality of items of interest, the information including, for each of the items of interest, positional coordinates, a geographic vicinity, and at least one associated category, comprising

(A) a communications link for communicating between a user of the database apparatus and a remote port, and

(B) means for transmitting a portion of the information to a user via the link upon receipt of a request signal representative of a geographic vicinity and a selected category of the items of interest, the transmitted portion of the information including identification of a position for the items of interest within the selected category and geographic vicinity.

18. Database apparatus according to claim 17 wherein the link comprises at least one of the following: telephone link, satellite link, radio-frequency link, infra-red link, internet link, facsimile link, fiber-optic link, coaxial cable link, television link, and combinations thereof.

19. Database apparatus according to claim 17 wherein the means for transmitting comprises a member of the group of a personal computer, mainframe, and data processor.
20. Database apparatus according to claim 17 wherein the geographic vicinity comprises spatial detail of the items of interest.
21. Database apparatus according to claim 17 wherein the geographic vicinity comprises a map of the items of interest in the selected category and selected geographic vicinity.
22. Database apparatus according to claim 17, further comprising data representing the information.
23. Database apparatus according to claim 17, wherein the information comprises additional detail for at least one of the items of interest, and further comprising means for communicating the additional detail to the remote port upon receipt of a signal indicating that a user has selected one of the items of interest.
24. Database apparatus according to claim 17, wherein the information comprises an advertisement associated with at least one of the items of interest, and further comprising means for communicating the advertisement to the remote port.
25. Database apparatus according to claim 17, wherein the information comprises a plurality of discrete geographic vicinities, and further comprising means for hierarchically storing and accessing any of the discrete vicinities in response to user inputs at the remote port.
26. Remote access port for remotely accessing a selected category of items of interest in a selected geographic vicinity from a database, the database being of the type which stores information about a plurality of items of interest, the information including, for

each of the items of interest, positional coordinates, a geographical vicinity and at least one associated category, the remote access port comprising

(A) a communications link for communicating between a user of the remote access port and the database, and

(B) means for generating a request signal representative of a selected category and a selected geographic vicinity of the items of interest in response to inputs by a user of the remote access port, the remote access port having a user interface for accepting the inputs and for indicating to the user the position of each of the items of interest within the selected category and geographic vicinity.

27. Remote access port according to claim 26 wherein the user interface further comprises one or more members of the group consisting of a television, telephone, facsimile, audible speaker, and personal computer display, for indicating the items of interest to the user.

28. Remote access port according to claim 26 wherein the user interface further comprises one or more members of the group consisting of a television interface, telephone interface, facsimile interface, and personal computer interface, for communicating the inputs by the user to the database.

29. Remote access port according to claim 26, further comprising means for interpreting the inputs by the user and formulating the inputs into the request signal.

30. Remote access port according to claim 26, further comprising means for interpreting certain of the inputs as items of interest and for transposing such inputs into a selected category automatically.

31. Remote access port according to claim 26 wherein said means for generating a request signal comprises one of a personal computer.

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32. Remote access port according to claim 26, wherein the information comprises additional detail for at least one of the items of interest, and further comprising means for (i) generating a signal representative of a user selection of at least one of the items of interest, and (ii) communicating the additional detail to the user.

33. Remote access port according to claim 26, wherein the information comprises an advertisement associated with at least one of the items of interest, and further comprising means for communicating the advertisement to the user.

34. Remote access port according to claim 26, wherein the information comprises a plurality of discrete geographic vicinities, and further comprising means for hierarchically selecting any of the discrete vicinities in response to user inputs.

✓ 35. A method for remotely determining the position of a selected category of items of interest in a selected geographic vicinity from a database, comprising the steps of: (i) storing information about a plurality of items of interest in the database, the information including, for each of the items of interest, positional coordinates, a geographic vicinity, and at least one associated category; (ii) accessing the database from a remote location and over a communication link; (iii) communicating, from the remote location, information representative of a selected category and a selected geographic vicinity to the database; and (iv) transmitting a portion of the information from the database and to the user over the link, the information including, at least, identification of a position for the items of interest within the selected category and geographic vicinity.

36. A method according to claim 35, wherein the step of communication information further comprises the step of generating a request signal indicative of the selected category and vicinity.

37. A method according to claim 36, wherein the step of transmitting a portion of the information further comprises the step of responding to the request signal.

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